

KODAK NUMERAL PUNCTURES

via JOHN MATHEWS

In the January 1998 (No.40) edition of '*South Pacific Perfin Bulletin*' John Mathews wrote an article about the Kodak Numeral Punctures. As I see these occasionally in dealers' stock, and, over the years, have been asked about them by various members, I thought John's article was too good to miss. As it was written, and illustrated, with reference purely to Australian stamps/labels perforated by Kodak (Australasia) Pty.Ltd., I am editing to make it applicable to our own GB stamps on Kodak labels.

"I had thought that perfin collectors were aware of the nature and origin of the Kodak numeral punctures but my attention has been drawn to a couple of lots in a recent auction in Victoria which has revised my thinking. The lots are listed under "Papua New Guinea", and are described respectively as

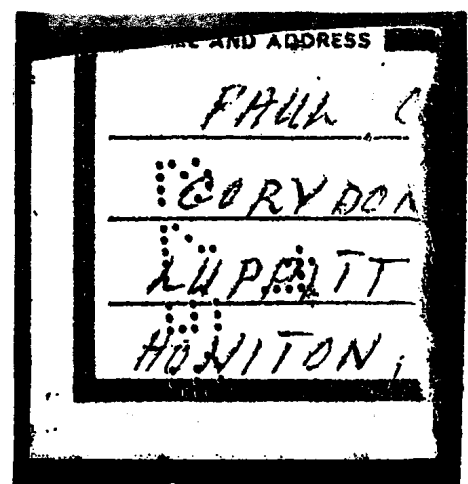
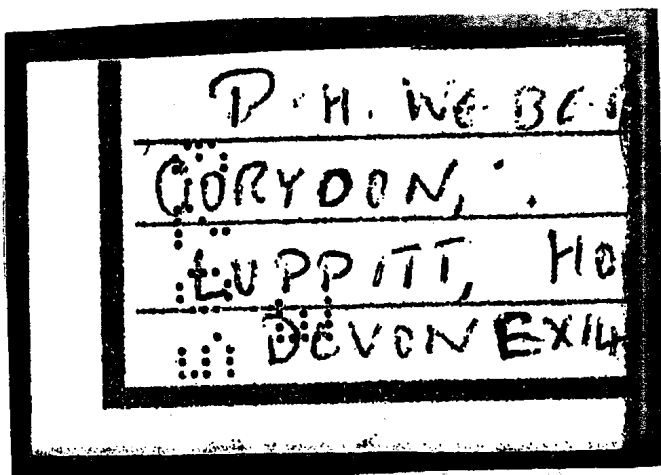
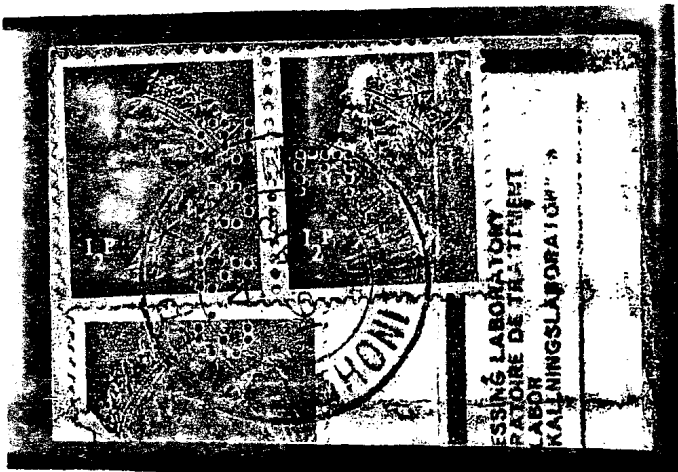
"PRIVATE PERFIN 4219 punctured on reverse of. "

and "PRIVATE PERFIN 9 over 3923 punctured on reverse of" with the comment "believed from Kodak, Port Moresby".

"During the 1960's, the popular format for tourist photography was as colour transparency slides. Kodak had the monopoly on the developing process, to the point where the cost of processing was included in the purchase price of the film. Included with the film was a cloth bag (later replaced by one of stout paper) with a draw string, and attached to the bag was a "fabric" label pre-addressed to Kodak's processing plant. On the reverse side of this label was a space for the customer's name and address, and the label was cut off and inserted into the box of slides so that the return address was visible to the postman.

"At the processing laboratory, the label and the end of the roll of film were each punctured with the same number so that the slides could be associated with the right customer. Again I recall the end of the film with puncture being included in the box of slides.

"The illustrations show two labels, both sides, and from these it can be seen that it was pure chance whether the stamp received a full puncture, partial puncture or no puncture depending on where it was placed on the label. On the stamps, the puncture appears reversed because the label was always punctured from the customer's address side, with the stamp underneath. Also, if the stamp was affixed in the upright position, the puncture would appear sideways.



"So in conclusion,

- *Kodak numeral punctures are not aimed at the stamp.*
- *They do not serve a security purpose and hence not in the same category as perfins.*
- *There is no implied association between the country issuing the stamp and the location of the Kodak laboratory where the puncture was applied "*